

NEWS

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For Immediate Release
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Energy Trust of Oregon launches financial incentive for Scientific Irrigation Scheduling

Oregon growers can capture energy and water savings of 10 percent or more

PORTLAND, Ore. — April 3, 2012 — Irrigation has long been viewed as being more art than science, but now Oregon’s agricultural industry has a tool to help increase crop yields by 1 to 2 percent or more depending on the crop each year and reduce energy consumption — and costs — in the process.

Scientific Irrigation Scheduling allows a grower to fine-tune irrigation by using soil moisture monitors, weather station data and evapotranspiration rates. An experienced vendor estimates crop moisture needs with algorithms to identify when and how much to irrigate.

Energy Trust’s new incentive is \$5.20 per irrigated acre, up to 100 percent of the cost of the service and/or equipment for as many as three years. The incentive is paid at the end of the growing season.

Energy Trust has identified specialized and experienced vendors across the state who offer the service and software that meet specifications for energy savings. In addition to water and energy savings of 10 percent or more, many growers also report reduced use of fertilizer, which has direct impacts to their bottom line and the environment.

“A grower who minimizes overwatering is also reducing wasteful use of energy by lowering the load on irrigation pumps,” said Eric Wilson, project manager for agriculture, Energy Trust. “Scientific Irrigation Scheduling is another way Energy Trust is working to help lower energy costs for Oregon growers.”

To see if a site is eligible for the incentive and to learn more about Scientific Irrigation Scheduling, visit www.energytrust.org/ag or call Energy Trust’s agriculture initiative team at 503-928-3154. Growers currently receiving Natural Resources Conservation Service funding for Scientific Irrigation Scheduling or irrigation water management are not eligible for this incentive.

Energy Trust of Oregon is an independent nonprofit organization dedicated to helping utility customers benefit from saving energy and tapping renewable resources. Our services, cash incentives and energy solutions have helped participating customers of Portland General Electric, Pacific Power, NW Natural and Cascade Natural Gas save nearly \$800 million on energy bills. Our work helps keep energy costs as low as possible, creates jobs and builds a sustainable energy future. Learn more at www.energytrust.org or call 1-866-368-7878.

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